

For the record, Applicants emphasize that although the claims were amended, and, therefore, might be argued to have been amended for a reason substantially related to patentability, a fair reading of the amended claims will reveal that the departures from the previous claims were for clarification purposes only, and that Applicants did not narrow the claims in any material respect. Therefore, Applicants submit that the amended claims are entitled to the full range of equivalents.

Early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

ADDITIONAL FEE

Please charge any insufficiency of fees, or credit any excess, to Deposit Account No. 14-1263.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 2/15/02

**MARKED-UP COPIES OF AMENDED CLAIMS,  
SHOWING CHANGES RELATIVE TO PREVIOUS VERSION**

Claim 1 (amended). A self-adhesive article for mechanical protection of painted plastic mounted parts of automobiles, comprising a backing material in film form having an outside and an inner side whose outer side is laminated with a layer of knitted fabric and whose inner side is pressure-sensitively adhesive through application of a self-adhesive composition.

Claim 2 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in claim 1, wherein the backing material in film form has a Young's modulus of less than 300 N/mm<sup>2</sup>[, preferably less than 150 N/mm<sup>2</sup>].

Claim 3 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [either of claims 1 and 2] Claim 1, wherein the backing material in film form has a thickness of from 10 to 150 µm[, preferably from 40 to 100 µm].

Claim 4 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 3] Claim 1, wherein the backing material in film form is composed of polyolefins, polyolefin blends, polyurethane, [and/or] flexible PVC or a combination thereof.

Claim 5 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 4] Claim 1, wherein the backing material in film form contains more than 0.15% by weight[, preferably more than 0.3% by weight,] of a light stabilizer.

Claim 6 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 5] Claim 1, wherein the backing material in film form is perforated, [and/or] foamed or both.

Claim 7 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 6] Claim 1, wherein the knitted fabric has a basis weight of from 10 to 200 g/m<sup>2</sup>[, preferably from 20 to 80 g/m<sup>2</sup>].

Claim 8 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 7] Claim 1, wherein the knitted fabric is composed of polyamide, polyester or polyethylene.

Claim 9 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 8] Claim 1, wherein the backing material is coated with from 10 to 80 g/m<sup>2</sup>[, preferably from 15 to 40 g/m<sup>2</sup>], of a self-adhesive composition.

Claim 10 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 9] Claim 1, wherein the backing material in film form is joined to the knitted fabric by means of a laminating adhesive.

Claim 12 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in claim 10 [or 11], wherein the laminating adhesive is applied over the complete area or partially[, particularly in the form of dots or stripes].

Claim 13 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 10 to 12] Claim 10, wherein the base polymer of the pressure sensitive adhesive is polyisobutylene or polyethylene-vinyl acetate.

Claim 14 (amended). The self-adhesive article as claimed in [any of claims 1 to 13] Claim 1, wherein an adhesion promoter is situated between backing material in film form and pressure sensitive adhesive.

Claim 15 (amended). [The use of the self-adhesive article as claimed in at least one of the preceding claims on] A method for protecting curved areas on the outside of automobiles which comprises applying to said curved areas the self-adhesive article of Claim 1.

Claim 16 (amended). [The use of the self-adhesive article as claimed in at least one of the preceding claims on the paint finish of automobile plastic parts such as, in particular, bumpers] A method for the protection of painted plastic automobile bumpers, which comprises applying to said bumpers the self-adhesive article of Claim 1